1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
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closely paralleling that of their Hindu neighbors. On the other hand, their social organization is relatively lacking in the cleavages of caste which are so prevalent all about them. Apart from the village, which is usually composed of a number of patrilineal kin-groups, territorial organization is weakly developed, and the tribe as a whole has never been politically unified so far as historical records indicate.

Even as a unique people the Santal merit special attention. Numbering today over three million, the region they occupy contains the richest deposits of iron, coal and other crucial industrial minerals in all of India. The chief source of their livelihood, at least since the nineteenth century, has been settled agriculture. Prior to the nineteenth century, hunting was also an important livelihood activity, but the great increase in the region's population and subsequent reduction of forest areas has made game extremely scarce; it is now difficult for the inhabitants even to obtain materials for fuel and building purposes. Though the chief source of food and cash is the annual rice crop, a few vegetables are also grown and some fruit trees maintained. Some villages are near enough to a river for fish to be readily obtained, while some villages stock their local ponds. Even prior to the introduction of modern industry in the region, the Santal had ceased to be economically independent. Although they once did some pottery making, weaving, and even iron smelting, they have come to rely almost exclusively on various local Hindu castes for these material products. Women from several low Hindu castes are used frequently as midwives. While almost no Santal are ritually served by Brahmin priests, itinerant Hindu holy men (*sadhu*) visit many Santal villages, consulting horoscopes and offering prayers for a fee or donation.

Most Santal are still agriculturists, but some have turned to